

Message Text

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53

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 ADP-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 SCI-06 AGR-20

AID-20 L-03 RSR-01 /108 W

----- 033163

R 231201Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9242

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, LI, BR, AR

SUBJECT: GOL SUSPENDS SAS FLIGHTS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

LAGOS FOR FAA

CASABLANCA FOR RCAA

1. GOL MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORTATION (MCIT) OFFICIALS TOLD EMBTFF GOL CABINET HAD CALLED IMMEDIATE HALT SAS FLIGHTS INTO ROBERTSFIELD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (RIA) FROM LATIN AMERICA. REASON FOR GOL ACTION WAS FEAR SPORES SOUTH AMERICAN LEAF BLIGHT MIGHT BE SPREAD LIBERIA'S CRUCIAL RUBBER INDUSTRY.

2. MOVE TO BAN SAS FLIGHTS ALLEGEDLY LED BY GOL AGMIN PHILLIPS WITH CONSIDERABLE IMPETUS FROM FIRESTONE. MCIT OFFICIALS CLAIMED THEY GIVE NO CHANCE PRESENT COUNTER-ARGUMENTS PRIOR CABINET ACTION BUT THEY NOW APPEALING DIRECTLY PRESIDENT TOLBERT.

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3. ACCORDING MCIT DEPMIN PROHIBITION OF SAS FLIGHTS WILL HAVE MAJOR NEGATIVE IMPACT FINANCIAL VIABILITY ROBERTSFIELD PNTERNATIONAL AIRPORT WHICH NOW IN SECOND STAGE USAID-FINANCED EXPANSION. HE SAID REVENUE LOSS FROM CABINET ACTION COULD REACH \$300,000 PER YEAR, IF SAS SHOULD DECIDE SHIFT LIBERIA-BASED OPS TO DAKAR OR ABIDJAN.

4. CIVAIR DIRECTOR PLACED REVENUE LOSS AT ABOUT \$100,000 PER YEAR IF SAS DROPPED ONLY SOUTH AMERICAN FLIGHTS. HE PREPARING PROPOSAL FOR PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERATION WHICH INCLUDES QUARANTINE OF DEBARKING PASSENGERS (ONLY 5-10 PER FLIGHT), SPRAYING OF LUGGAGE AND CARGO, MAINTENANCE OF TRANSIT PASSENGERS ABOARD AIRCRAFT. HE, TOO, FEARS SHIFT SAS OPS TO ALTERNATE AFRICAN AIRPORT.
BEAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LANDING RIGHTS, AIRLINES, AIRPORTS, PLANT QUARANTINE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973MONROV04642
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: MONROVIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730820/aaaaaopa.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <17-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOL SUSPENDS SAS FLIGHTS FROM SOUTH AMERICA LAGOS FOR FAA
TAGS: ETRN, LI, BR, AR, XR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005